2:Gamble S-5 (1926-1933) 1954 AF12 North China AF12

588 who had died unmarried. The couple might be buried in adjoining graves as was usual for a husband and wife. Their spirits could be together in the other world and they would not be lonely, as an heir could be picked who would carry on the ancestral worship and prevent their spirits wandering as orphans. If the wedding was arranged the chosen heir would go to the woman's home carrying in his hand a paper banner in which was written her name, age, etc. Accompanied by her family, he would bring her coffin to the boy's family graveyard. Sometimes it was the girl's family who took the initiative and called in the match-maker.

Death

764 When death occurred the first duty of the family was to dress the body in its grave clothes lest the spirit of the dead person make its entrance into the other world undressed. The clothes were usually purchased before death occurred so that they would be available for prompt use. A man was dressed in a big hat, a new pair of shoes, trousers, and a single cotton gown. A woman's head-dress was a piece of yellow cloth instead of a hat. The grave clothes had no buttons or buttonholes. The trousers of both men and women were fastened at the ankle with strings instead of the usual ankle bands. A small silver bell, with a string attached to it, was put into the dead person's mouth. The string hung outside the mouth. Poor families used a copper cash instead of a silver bell.

763 White papers folded and cut into three strips were hung outside the family gate to announce a death in the home. The papers were hung on the left side of the gate for a male, on the right side for a female. (Right and left are of a person looking out of the gate.) Later a large square of white paper was posted outside the gate. On it were written the deceased's name, age, and the date and time of his birth. The large square paper, too, was posted on the left of the gate for a male and on the right for a female. Still later mourning cards were sent to friends and relatives to announce the death and give the dates set for any special services, interment, etc.

764 When the body had been dressed in its funeral clothes it was taken from the k'ang and placed on a wooden board bed. On the bed was placed a mattress made of yellow-gold cloth, lined with blue cloth and filled with cotton. A wooden pillow was put under the corpse's head.

2:Gamble S-5 (1926-1933) 1954 AF12 North China AF12

765 incense burner, a lamp, and mourning papers. The oil lamp was kept lit day and night. Mourners who came to pay their respects to the dead lit the mourning papers from the lamp and burned them to illuminate the way for the dead and so keep him from going astray.

On the night after the body was put into the coffin, usually the second night after death, the members of the family, except the sons who stayed at home to mourn, went to the T'u Ti temple to worship. They carried with them a broom, a stick, and a gown belonging to the dead person. The broom, with the stick tied across it, was placed before the altar of the god and later was covered with the gown. The family carried the broom back home saying "Father (Mother), please dress yourself and have something to eat. We are going to send you away to heaven in a cart".

When they got home they set up a table on the roadside outside the gate. On the table were placed three bowls of meat dumplings, a mirror, a handkerchief, and a basin (a feast and toilet equipment for the dead). A circle of ashes was spread in the road and into this was put a horse and cart made of paper and kaoliang stalks. Sometimes a paper image of a cart driver was added. The horse, cart, and driver were set facing the east. Then they were burned in order to provide transportation for the spirit to the Western Heaven and to keep it from becoming too tired from walking. The ashes were put around the paper horse and cart to insure their use by the deceased, and to prevent any wandering orphaned spirits from coming near and taking the cart as it burned.

Some families made special flour cakes to be burned with the horse and cart. The number of cakes was equal to the age of the deceased. It was said that if, the next morning, a boy picked up a cake and ate it he would grow up to be brave and strong.

• 763 When a death occurred neighbors often spread ashes in front of their doorways to keep the departed spirit from entering. The spirits avoided the ashes lest they show their presence by leaving a footprint in them. Spirits also feared ashes as fire, which ashes represent, is a yang element while ghosts belong to the yin part of the universe. Ashes were put before the family gate when a man went to pay his respects to the dead in a neighbor's family, so that when he returned the spirit of the departed could not come back with him.

764 If the funeral was for a member of a wealthy family a mat shed was built over the courtyard, furniture was rented, and a feast was provided